A BRIEF

NARRATION

OF THE

IMPRISONMENT

OF

Mr. *FRANCIS BAMPFIELD*,

A Pious and Loyall Minister late of *Sherburn* in *Dorcetshire*.

With Mr. *Phillips* (his Assistant) being now both turn'd out for their *Non-Conformity*,

As also

The Imprisoning of several of the Inhabitants who came to hear him Exercise at his own house, *September the* 19. 1662.

Together with

The manner of their carrying away, and hard usage when they were in Prison.

Printed in the year, 1662.

BODLEIAN
1 NOV. 1936
LIBRARY

A Brief NARRATION Of the Impriſonment of Mr. FRANCIS BAMPFIELD, &c.

SIR,

'TIs poſſible the ſmall affairs of this Town may go far, and be miſ-repreſented; to the end you may be truly, and (as far as I could learn) fully informed, you have this Narrative, which I had from eye and ear-witneſſes of the whole. My ſelf was preſent only part of one day, *viz.* at the paying off the Bill, whereof more anon. That you may the better conſider of the whole, you may underſtand, that Mr. *Francis Bampfield*, ſome years ſince, was long and earneſtly ſolicited by the Town of *Sherborn* to ſucceed Mr. *Lyford* (a very Reverend and Loyal Miniſter deceaſed) in the Vicaridge of that place; and beſides other Reaſons, they were eſpecially importunate with him for this, *viz.* his loyalty to the King, (for you muſt know that this Town has been notorious for their Loyalty) whoſe Cauſe he conſtantly aſſerted under all the changes to the laſt, as it is in theſe parts generally known, and what he ſuffered upon that account, and was alſo a painful Preacher of the Word, which two, it ſeems by

him for one (amongſt many others) are things conſiſtent, *viz.* Piety and Loyalty. This Mr. *Bampfield* continued ſome years amongſt this People, inſtant in his work, and was, as I have heard and do believe, utterly unſatisfied in conſcience with the conditions required by the late Act for uniformity: whereupon he (as many other good men beſide, which many every where, as far as I can learn, do moſt ſadly lament) The Lords day before *Bartholomew* day laſt took his ſolemn leave of his people; at which (as I hear, for I was not preſent) there were a great Church full of weeping eies, and ſad hearts, though ſome it may be ſecretly rejoyced, (for ſo goes the World now adaies) and in a ſhort time after he removed himſelf and Family to another hired houſe in the Town, where for the moſt part he has continued ever ſince, till *Friday* laſt, being the 19th of *September*, when in the evening he was in his houſe, and with his Family praying, and opening and applying of a Scripture, (as his manner was for ſome years before he came to *Sherborn*, which my ſelf have ſometimes heard) which was at this time, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 5, 6, 7. whence he had this Obſervation: *That way the Devil and his Inſtruments take to hinder Grace, God will wiſely over-rule to further it.* To this work divers of the Town came and took their part, (as all other good Subjects and good Chriſtians, as I ſhould judge, if they might would do; for certainly one may ſerve God and be a good Subject, whatever ſome may think) and whilſt he and his Neighbours were attentive at this Exerciſe, in comes one *Sugar* with other Soldiers (a man noted for no great baſhfulneſs or ſobriety, but it ſeems one that would ſerve for ſuch a purpoſe) and required them all in the Kings name (I am ſorry any ſhould abuſe it to ſuch a purpoſe) to be ſilent, and depart the Room; which, as bold as he was, he did not without ſo great conſternation upon himſelf, ſpeaking a word in a breath, as was much obſerved by many.

Now you muſt know, that ſome time before this, ſome were ſent to two of the Deputy Lieutenants of the County, to know whether the courſe of Duty uſed in Mr. *Bampfield*'s Family were conceived by them to be againſt Law, and if ſo,

that

that they would desist; but without any answer, one *Thornton* of this Town, an *Apothecary*, who came in with *Sugar*, said he had a Warrant from the Deputy Lieutenants to serve upon Mr. *Brampfield* and Mr. *Phillips* his Assistant, and ten more of the chiefest that were there, (a rare president to leave it to under-Officers to insert whom they please as the chiefest, and so to wreak their malice) and thereupon took the Ministers, (I do not reckon the interruption of the Duty) and about five and twenty more (for to so many were the ten presently grown) and carried them (all men, what reason privileg'd the women I know not) to prison, to the Provost-Marshal, (an Officer that *Magna Charta* has no acquaintance with) in the same Town, where they all continued Prisoners till *Wednesday* night after, dividing the Ministers in a room apart from their People. I had almost forgotten to tell you, that all this was not only without hearing any defence, but without so much as a Summoning, or any other notice of complaint (if any ever were) made against them.

Whilst they were thus imprisoned, their entertainment was somewhat unusual; about two and twenty of them (whereof one was a very aged man) had but one room for five daies and nights, wherein was but one bed: but the Prisoners spent the time better there than in sleeping, as I have heard from many, *viz.* in praying, repeating of Sermons, and singing of Psalms. *Saturday* about 7 or 8 of the Clock in the Evening, the Prisoners had got leave to meet and pray together, (for you must know that was a thing not to be endured without leave) and whilst one of them was at Prayer with the rest, the Soldiers opened the door, brake in and spake aloud to him that prayed, calling him Rogue, and bidding him make an end, and with other Soldiers, laid hands on him, and with great violence wholly interrupted him, and forced away the Prisoners.

Lords Day there was no publick Worship of God in the Town; in the Forenoon the Prisoners again desired leave to hear their Minister in the Goal, which at first (it seems it was an unreasonable request) was denied; but afterwards Mr.

Bampfield

Bampfield should have leave to preach to the Prisoners; but none of the Town must come in (which yet many desired; and some at other times purchased of the Soldiers, who were presently after they had payed the fine plucked out again) Mr. *Bampfield* preaching in the Prison, divers of the Town got into a backside where they could hear his voice, which did belong to one *Vincent*, who threatens them all with Writs for the trespass, though leave was first obtained of his Wife, and ten times more offered than he received dammage. You see how many ways are taken to vex and ruine such as are quiet in the Land.

One evening, that the Soldiers also might shew a little devotion, they would needs have *Common-Prayer* in the Goal amongst themselves, and when he that read it was come as far as *Lighten our darkness*, one of them thinking that to be part of a *Psalm*, began to put it into a *tune*, which made the rest no small mirth. Lords day at night the Prisoners and Ministers had leave upon request to come together again, and Mr. *Phillips* to preach; but whilst he was in prayer before Sermon, the Soldiers came in violently and took away his Chair, disturbed that Exercise also, so as they had no Sermon, & to be short (for it seems such things may not be long) upon *Wednesday* there came together 4 or 5 Deputy Lieutenants who called before them first Mr. *Bampfield* then Mr. *Philips*, & afterward the rest of the Prisoners, where Sir *John Stroad* of *Parwham* had the Chair (who as common fame says, formerly abjured the King,) & probably was by the Gentlemen his Companions now preferred to this service for his eminent Loyalty) Mr. *Bampfield* being examined, owned that he had been at prayer with (and was at the time of the interruption preaching to) his Family, and that his door being open divers of the Town came in and took their share therein (and by the way observe, that during this inquisition the door was shut, and none of Mr. *Bampfields* friends suffered to come, though the Law require all Courts of justice to be open, and if it should be otherwise, the mischiefs were almost infinite.) After several hearings and withdrawings, in all which the Deputy Lieutenants did not lay to his charge any one the least expression

in

in Prayer or Preaching (and yet me thinks the quarrel should not be againſt theſe two) which was ſeditious, or any other way peccant againſt any of their Laws, which I think worthy of ſome obſervation. However, cauſe or no cauſe, the Deputy Lieutenants (for ſo I call them yet) by their Sir *John* aforeſaid, declared this meeting tending to ſedition, and required ſureties of Mr. *Bampfield* for his good behaviour and appearance at next Aſſiſes, which Mr. *Bampfield* gave accordingly, as afterward did his aſſiſtant Mr. *Philips*, and all the reſt of the Priſoners, and thus the cauſe was transferred from the Court Marſhal to the ordinary Courts of Juſtice, and yet the Priſoners were fain to pay not only fees to the Juſtices Clerks for their Recogniſances, but fees to the Provoſt Marſhal of the Deputy Lieutenants, in the mean time the ſame individual perſons being both Juſtices and Deputy Lieutenants, beſides what they paid for the Soldiers dyet and their waiting and their drinking, which were ſeveral particulars in the Bill, beſides that ſome of the Priſoners were ſo poor as to be judged not worth the fees demanded. I had almoſt omitted ſome paſſages during this impriſonment. Divers that brought victuals to their friends or relations, were not ſuffered to deliver it, ſome alſo the Soldiers made themſelves merry with, and took amongſt themſelves. Some had their ſuſtenance brought in polls of hats, that ſo it might be concealed and not taken from them by the Soldiers. To one of the Priſoners (who had been Soldier in the late war for King *Charles* the firſt) his ſiſter bringing victuals, had it violently taken from her.

Some were impriſoned, who came only to viſit the Priſoners, another alſo of the Priſoners, (and Soldier of the Kings) had bail of a 1000 pounds offered for his liberty, that he might go home to his Wife, who then lay in at his Houſe about a flight ſhot from the Goal, but (it ſeems this offence was very heinous) could not prevail, others that came to viſit the Priſoners were violently handled, one tumbled, another kicked down ſtairs by the Soldiers, (the charge of whoſe good attendance and ſervice all the while, came all in upon the Priſoners Bill) and whilſt the Priſoners were praying the

the Soldiers were doing as you know some Soldiers use to do. Thus you see how kindly some of his Majesty's Loyal Subjects are dealt with up and down the Country, which I the rather write, because if he were throughly informed, probably some would be more moderate; for I cannot yet perswade my self, that these and such like doings are any whit for his service. The Lord wisely over-rule that way to further (which the Devil and his Instruments take to hinder) his work.

Sherburn Septemb.
the 25. 1662.

FINIS.

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA